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COURTSHIP BEHAVIOUR IN THE OIL BEETLE, MELOE PROSCARABAEUS L. — In April 1987 I collected a number of oil beetles from a South Wales locality for use in a BBC production. They were kept under observation for a few days, and the following may be of interest:

The antennae of the male have a curious "kink" about half-way along their length, in the form of a deeply concave notch. It has been suggested by Imms (1977 *General Textbook of Entomology* Vol. 1 p. 30) that the male antennae "... are used for holding the females. . .". The male beetle is some 5mm smaller than the female, and when the abdomens make contact during mating, the male is unable to reach the antennae of the female with his own.

The courtship of these fascinating beetles is a mixture of the brutish and the subtle. A male runs at, and scrambles on the back of any, and every, passing female. They rarely attempt to mount a male, suggesting a clear discriminatory power. Once on top of the female he sits with his head over hers, moving his head over her head and thorax whilst rapidly vibrating his palps. The male then bends his antenna at the notch, grips those of the female, and by lifting his head draws her antennae through his. This manoeuvre completed, the male slips down the female's back and attempts copulation.

Whilst the females observed were somewhat unresponsive, and there being no guarantee that they were virgin females, the behaviour of gripping and "caressing" antennae appears to be an intricate component of courtship. RUPERT D. G. BARRINGTON  
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CHLOROCYSTIS CHLOERATA MABILLE (THE SLOE PUG) (LEP.: GEOMETRIDAE) IN LEICESTERSHIRE — A single male of this species was caught in the Rothamsted Insect Survey light trap at Empingham (Site. No. 280, O.S. Grid Ref. SK 953 087) on the night of 17/18-vi-1987. Identification was confirmed by examination of the genitalia. So far as I am aware *chloerata* has not been recorded previously from Leicestershire. — ADRIAN M. RILEY, Entomology Department, Rothamsted Experimental Station, Harpenden, Herts., AL5 2JQ.